ISSN 0712-7774

CEREBUS

GOING HOME

29

$2.25USA $3.50CANADA £1.50UK

260
NOV

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CEREBUS
NO. 260 NOVEMBER 2000

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GOING HOME

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BOOK ONE
Sudden Moves
(Cerebus 232 to 239)

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BOOK TWO
Fall and the River
(Cerebus 240 to 250)

•

BOOK THREE
Form & Void
(Cerebus 251 to 265)

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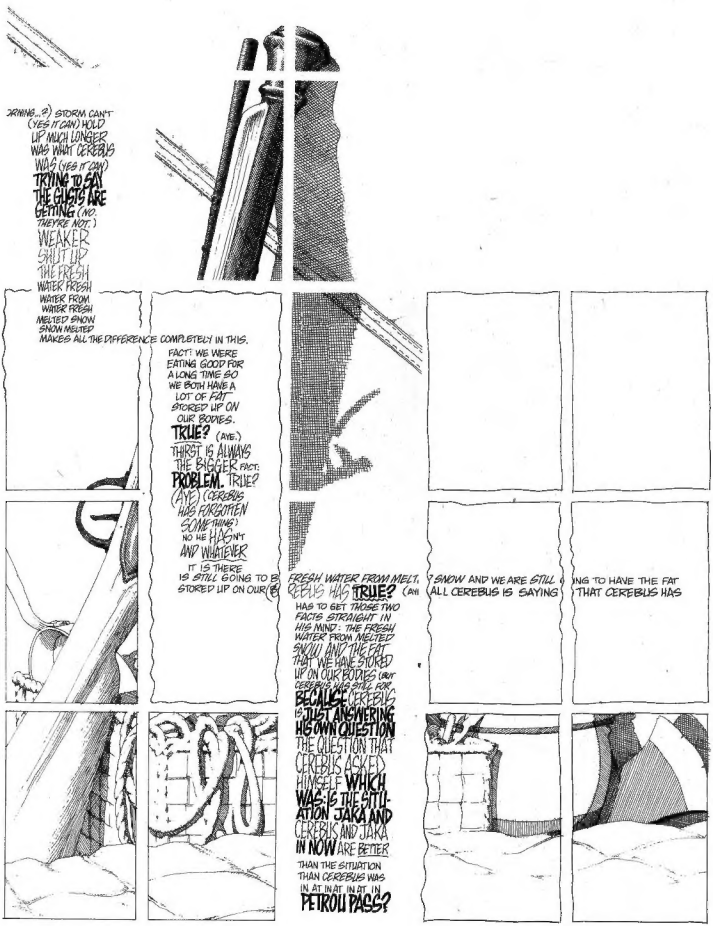
MUST'VE BEEN THREE DAYS AGO... FIVE BISCUITS A DAY EACH AND OH JAKA HAD THE EXTRA ONE THIS MORNING...THOSE TIMES FIVE TIMES TWO...THIRTY... ONE HUND TO A BOX...TWO BOXES...TWO HUN MINUS WHAT DID CEREBUS SAY THIRTY... R'GHT...TWO HUNDRED... MINUS THIRTY EQUALS ONE SSSIX BY TWO TIMES FIVE EQUALS TE EQUALS SEVENTEEN DAYS AND FRESH WATER FROM MELTED SNOW AND WE'RE FINE...JUST Y FOR THE STORM TO LET UP AND CEREBUS CAN DO SOME FORAGING OR WE'LL JUST KEEP OUR EYES PEELED! WHEN WE GET MOVING AGAIN...WE'RE FINE...NO WE'R NOT BUT CEREBUS FORGETS WHY WE'RE NOT--WHAT WUS I;

HEH. GOING 'BLANK' LIKE THAT... CEREBUS FORGOT...THAT PART... JUST LIKE AT PETROU PASS. JUST GOING BLANK. BUT THIS TIME NEARLY AS BAD AS PETROU PASS. FRESH WATER FROM MELTED SNOW--WE WOULDVE KILLED FOR FRESH WATER FROM MELTED SNOW AT PETROU PASS--AND THERE'S JUST THE TWO OF US AND TWO HUNDRED BBC'T PETROU PASS. TWO HUNDRED I LOATED US FOREVER(NOT TWO DRED WHAT DID CEREBUS SAY?)..... ONE SEVENTY (IF IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS, CEREBUS IS PRETTY... SURE THE FIRST DAY WE W TO THE OVERHANGING FLAT PLACE AND THE

CEREBUS COULD FIGURE IT OUT IF THE WIND WOULD JUST

IT'S A GOOD, STRONG TENT. GOOD, GOOD HEAVY STITCHING. CEREBUS WOULD BET WILD HORSES COULDN'T RIP THAT STITCHING. IN FACT, EXCEPT FOR THAT LITTLE TEAR YES...TER... DRY (OR WAS THAT JUST THIS MORNING...?)


DRIVING...?) STORM CAN'T (YES IT CAN) HOLD UP MUCH LONGER WAS WHAT CEREBUS WAS (YES IT CAN) TRYING TO SAY THE GUSTS ARE GETTING (NO. THEY'RE NOT.) WEAKER SHUT UP THE FRESH WATER FRESH WATER FROM WATER FRESH MELTED SNOW SNOW MELTED MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE COMPLETELY IN THIS. FACT: WE WERE EATING GOOD FOR A LONG TIME SO WE BOTH HAVE A LOT OF FAT STORED UP ON OUR BODIES. TRUE? (AYE.) THIRST IS ALWAYS THE BIGGER FACT: PROBLEM. TRUE? (AYE.) CEREBUS HAS FORGOTEN SOMETHING! NO HE HASN'T AND WHATEVER IT IS THERE IS STILL GOING TO B STORED UP ON OUR B FRESH WATER FROM MELT, CEREBUS HAS TRUE? (AY HAS TO GET THOSE TWO FACTS STRAIGHT IN HIS MIND: THE FRESH WATER FROM MELTED SNOW AND THE FAT THAT WE HAVE STORED UP ON OUR BODIES (BUT CEREBUS HAS STILL FOR BECAUSE CEREBUS IS JUST ANSWERING HIS OWN QUESTION THE QUESTION THAT CEREBUS ASKED HIMSELF WHICH WAS: IS THE SITUATION JAKA AND CEREBUS AND JAKA IN NOW ARE BETTER THAN THE SITUATION THAN CEREBUS WAS IN AT IN AT IN AT IN PETROLI PASS? ? SNOW AND WE ARE STILL ALL CEREBUS IS SAYING NG TO HAVE THE FAT THAT CEREBUS HAS

(AWE) WELL THAT'S ALL CEREBUS WAS DOING WAS TRYING TRYING TRYING AT LEAST WHEN **CEREBUS WASN'T INTERRUPTING HIMSELF** TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION AND THE ANSWER AS CEREBUS HAS ALREADY ADMITTED IS "YES, CEREBUS AND JAKA **ARE** BETTER OFF

BECAUSE (A) WE HAVE FRESH WATER FROM MELTED SNOW IN AN UNLIMITED SUPPLY AND (B)

SPOT BLANK SPOT BLANK SPOT (B) WE HAVE A LOT OF BODY FAT STORED UP. IT'S I LIKE *CRITICAL-FACT* WHEN I TO SAY "**THINKING** IS **FINE. FRETTING** IS THE BITCH." SO THAT'S REALLY ALL THAT CEREBUS IS TRYING TO DO HERE IS TO STICK TO TO TO T THINKING THINKING THINKING TH LY ABOUT THOSE THINGS THAT *REALLY, REALLY, REALLY* APPLY TO THIS SITUATION. (*CEREBUS HAS A QUESTION*) SNORE -- NO PROBLEM ALL PART OF THE THINKING THINKING THINKING WHAT'S THE QUESTION? / M

THE QUESTION? (WHAT IF WHAT BUS HAS FORGOTTEN IS SOMET THAT *REALLY, REALLY, REALLY* DO APPLY TO OUR SITUATION) OH. WEL THAT'S WHY CEREBUS WAS POINTING OUT THAT (APART FROM THE FRESH WATER FRO TED SNOW AND BODY FAT THA E HAVE STORED UP) IN SOMETH ELSE (AYE.) WELL THAT'S CERTAIN SOMETHING WORTH THINKING ABOUT (OR REMEMBERING) OR THINKIN BOUT (OR REMEMBERING) OR THINKING ABOUT UNWISE THINKING ABOUT ~~HAM-BLOCKING HIS OWN HEAD OFF~~ DYING AS A ~~DWARF~~

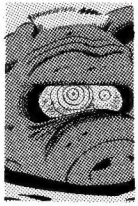
UNWISE SMELL YES - BECAU THAT IS JUST **FRETTING** AND THERE IS NOTHING **CEREBUS** CAN DO TO CHANG IT) AFTER THAT (AFTER THAT?) AFTER THAT WELL CEREBUS RAN BACK TO THE **TENT** BECAUSE WE HAD TO GET **OUT** OF THERE.. WE HAD TO GET **RIGHT OUT**..

...OF...

SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT. (YES.) WHAT DID CERBERUS JUST...?

"I RAN BACK TO THE TENT BECAUSE WE HAD TO GET OUT"

"WHY?"



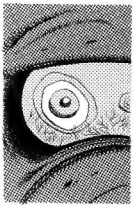
"YOU'RE VERY CALM."

"I'M VERY CALM BECAUSE YOU SAID IF I GOT HYSTERICAL AGAIN YOU WOULD HIT ME.

I DON'T WANT YOU TO HIT ME.

SO I AM VERY CALM."

"MARY KILLED HAM."



"I UNDERSTAND THAT. I TOLD YOU THAT I BELIEVE YOU. MARY KILLED HAM. THE PART THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND... THE PART AT I AM ASK BOUT IS WHY

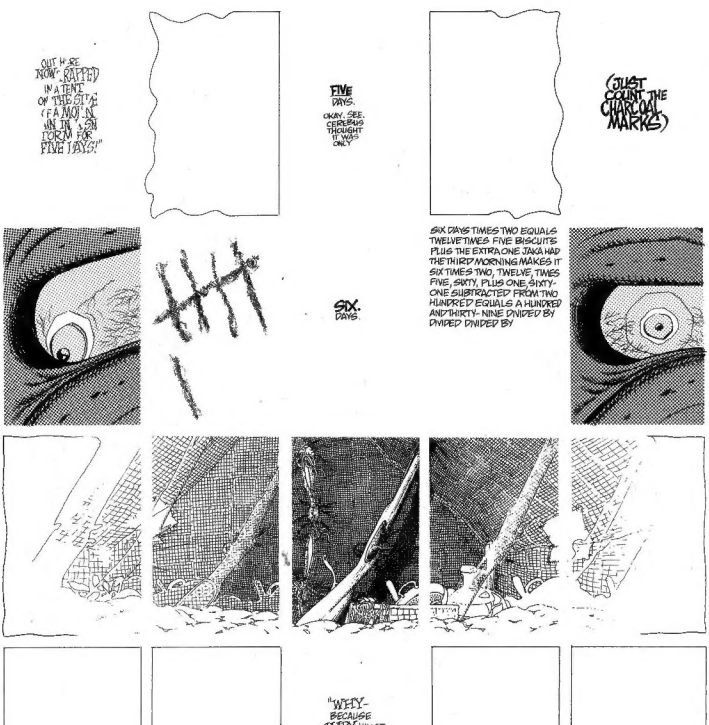
"CERBERUS DOESN'T KNOW WHY MARY KILLED HAM."

"PLEASE LISTEN. OU ALWAYS INT RRUPT AT THE SAME POINT. WHY WE HAD TO GET OUT.

OU UNDERSTA E QUESTION? HY WE HAD TO GET OUT? "

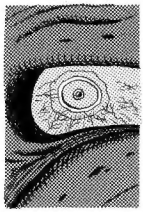
"WHY...?"

"WHY- BECAUSE MARY KILLED HAM - DID WE HAVE TO GET OUT?"


OUT HERE NOW, TRAPPED IN A TENT ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN IN A SNOWSTORM FOR FIVE DAYS!"
FIVE DAYS.
OKAY. SEE, CERBERUS THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY
(JUST COUNT THE CHARCOAL MARKS)
SIX DAYS.
SIX DAYS TIMES TWO EQUALS TWELVE TIMES FIVE BISCUITS PLUS THE EXTRA ONE JAKA HAD THE THIRD MORNING MAKES IT SIX TIMES TWO, TWELVE, TIMES FIVE, SIXTY, PLUS ONE, SIXTY-ONE SUBTRACTED FROM TWO HUNDRED EQUALS A HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE DIVIDED BY DIVIDED DIVIDED BY
"WHY- BECAUSE MARY KILLED HAM- DID WE HAVE TO GET OUT?"

CERBERUS REMEMBERS NOW (PART OF IT) ALL (PART) OF IT. WE COULD BE HOLED UP IN THAT HUNTING LODGE FOR THE WINTER RIGHT NOW IF CERBERUS HAD JUST SIGNED THE PIECE OF PAPER SAYING WE'RE (JAKA DIDN'T- HASN'T- SAID A WORD ABOUT THAT) NAY. SHE JUST ASKED "WHY DID WE HAVE TO GET OUT?" AND LET CERBERUS FIGURE IT OUT ON HIS OWN (AND CERBERUS WAS) FIGURED IT (PART OF IT) OUT. (THAT) THIS IS ALL CERBERUS' FAULT, THAT WE ARE TRAPPED IN A TENT ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN IN A (THAT WE ARE BOTH GOING TO STARVE TO DEATH) THAT WE ARE BOTH GOING TO STARVE TO DEATH.

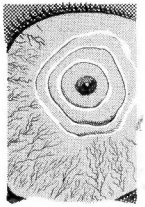
YES.



FART OF IT.

YOU MEAN THIS IS ONE OF THOSE "CEREBUS HAS GOOD NEWS FOR CEREBUS AND CEREBUS HAS BAD NEWS FOR CEREBUS" DEALS — ONLY IN THIS CASE IT IS A "CEREBUS HAS BAD NEWS FOR CEREBUS AND CEREBUS HAS WORSE NEWS FOR CEREBUS" DEAL? (AYE.) (YES.) AND STARVING TO DEATH IN A TENT ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN IN A SNOWSTORM IS ONLY THE BAD NEWS?!?

(AYE.)



CEREBUS HAS GOT TO HEAR WHAT THE WORSE (CEREBUS WILL JUST BLANK OUT AGAIN.)

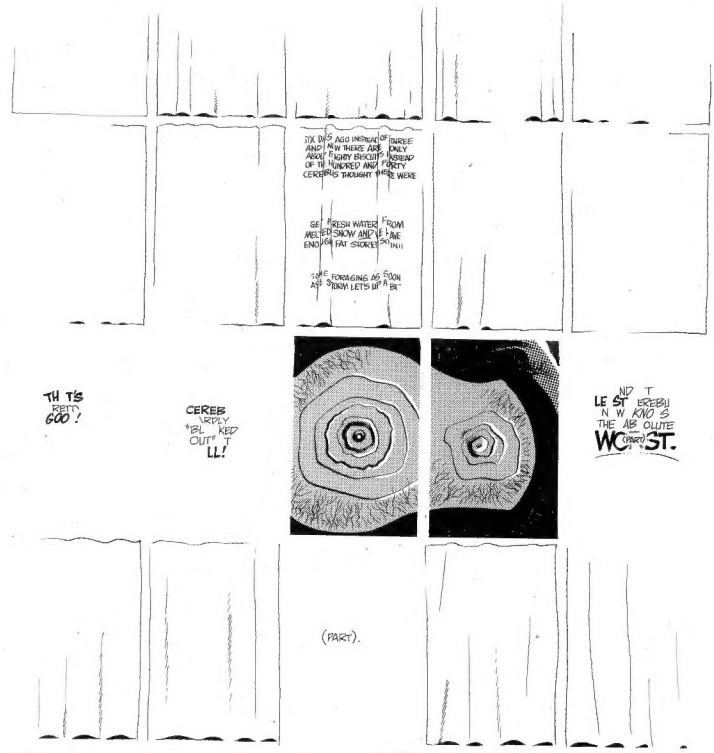
CEREBUS PROMISES HE WILL NOT "BLANK"

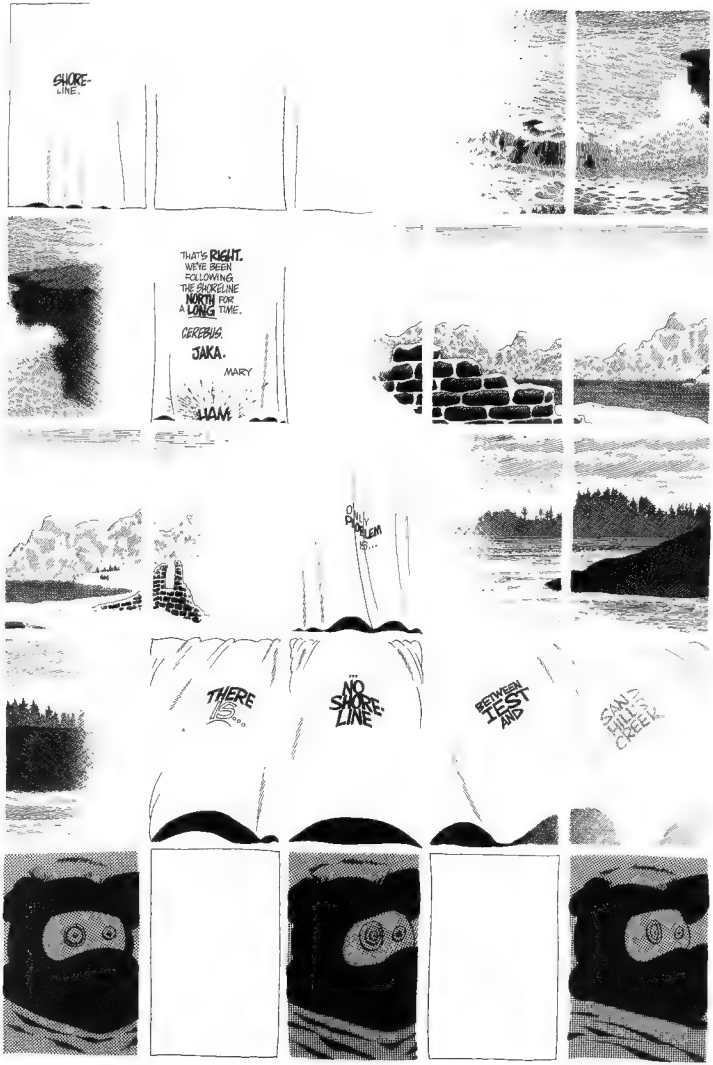
"ATE MY H HALF"

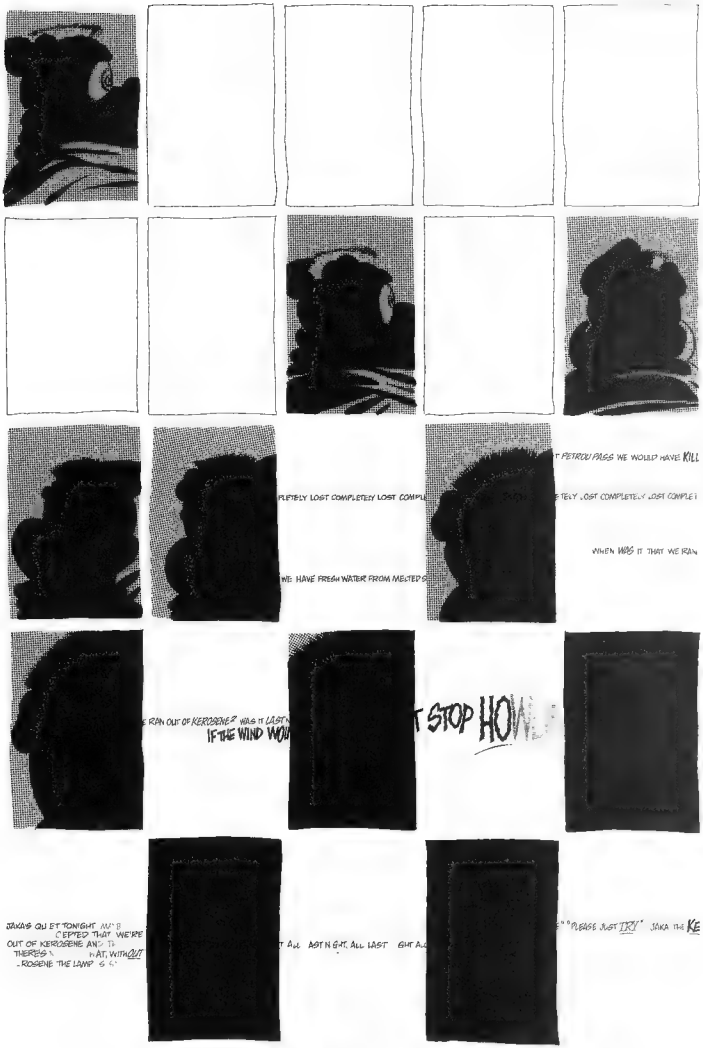
"MY H HALF OF THE BLOCK IT'S B

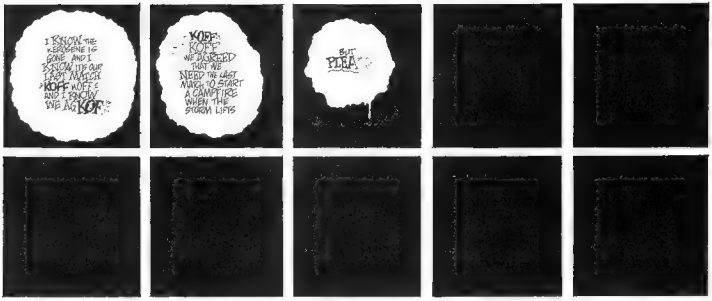
"W-W WHILE YOU WERE S-S-S SLEEPING

I'M SORRY I JUST GOT S-SO HUNGR

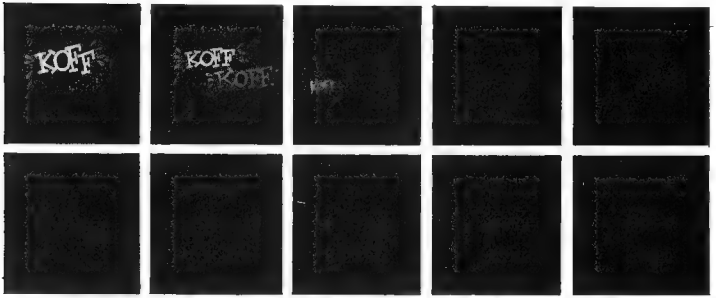

SIX DAYS AGO INSTEAD OF THREE
AND NOW THERE ARE ONLY
ABOUT EIGHTY BISCUITS INSTEAD
OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY
CERES THOUGHT THERE WERE
FRESH WATER FROM
MELTED SNOW AND ICE.
ENOUGH FAT STORED
FORAGING AS SOON
AS THE STORM LETS UP
TH T'S
PRETTY
GOOD!
CERES
REPLY
"BL KED
OUT" T
LL!
(PART).
"SO WHEN THE STORM
LIFTS — DO WE JUST
KEEP FOLLOWING THE
SHORELINE
NORTH?"


SHORE-
LINE.
THAT'S RIGHT. WE'RE BEEN FOLLOWING THE SHORELINE NORTH FOR A LONG TIME.
CEREBUS.
JAKA.
MARY
HMM.
ONLY PROBLEM IS...
THERE IS...
... NO SHORE-LINE
BETWEEN
IEST
AND
SAINT HILL'S CREEK

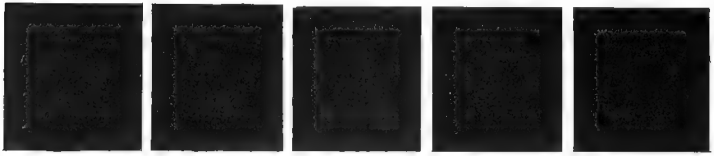

PETROV PASS WE WOULD HAVE KILL
PLETELY LOST COMPLETELY LOST COMPL
TELY LOST COMPLETELY LOST COMPLE
WE HAVE FRESH WATER FROM MELTED S
WHEN WAS IT THAT WE RAN
RAN OUT OF KEROSENE? WAS IT LAST
IF THE WIND WOU
T STOP HOW
JAKA'S QUIET TONIGHT. MAYB
CEPTED THAT WE'RE
OUT OF KEROSENE AND TH
THERE'S
NAT, WITHOUT
- ROSENE THE LAMP S
T ALL NOT N GHT. ALL LAST GHT AL
" "PLEASE JUST TRY" SAKA THE KE


I KNOW THE KEROSENE IS GONE AND I SHOULD PUT OUR FIRE OUT, BUT CECIL KOFF KOFF'S AND I KNOW WE AGREE KOF!
KOFF KOFF! WE AGREED THAT WE NEED TO WAIT MARCH TO START A CAMPFIRE WHEN THE STORM LIFTS
BUT FLEA!

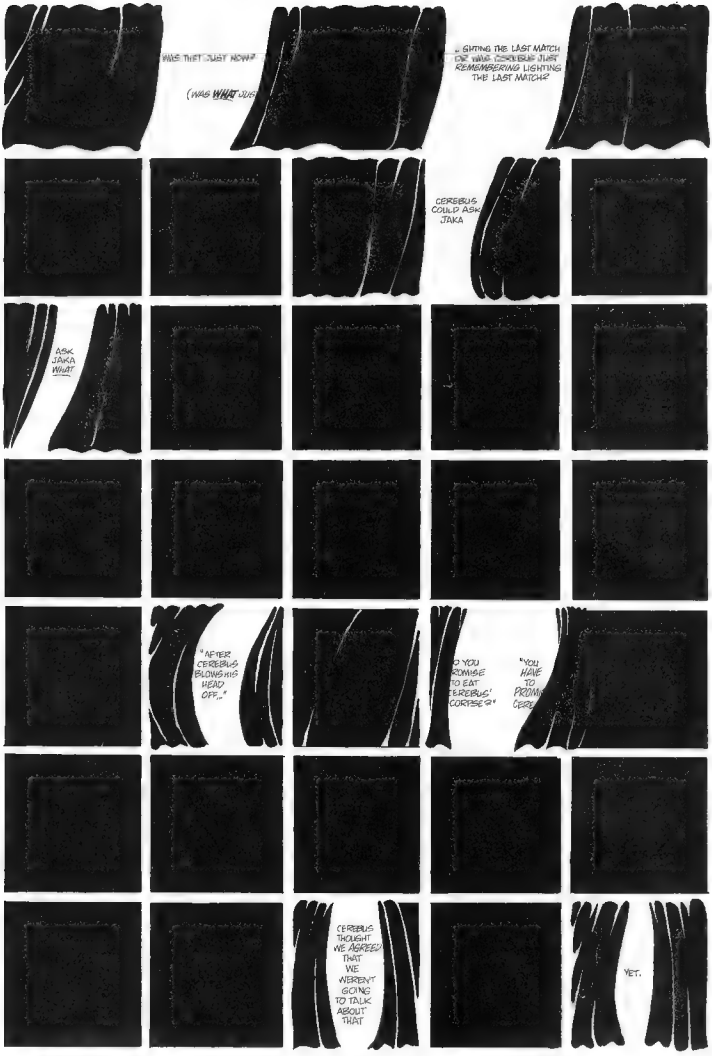
THE STORM ISN'T GOING TO LIFT. (CAVE) JAKA KNOWS IT. AND CEREBUS KNOWS IT (CAVE) (YES) THE STORM ISN'T GOING TO LIFT BECAUSE IT ISN'T A STORM. IT'S CALLED WINTER AND IT ISN'T GOING TO STOP FOR SIX MONTHS AND BY THAT TIME CEREBUS AND JAKA WILL BE LONG DEAD! (CAVE: ANGRY) AND IT IS CEREBUS FAULT (BECAUSE!) BECAUSE CEREBUS WAS A COWARD JUST LIKE HAMM WAS (WHAT WAS CEREBUS AFRAID OF?) CEREBUS DOESN'T KNOW. CEREBUS JUST KNEW WE HAD TO GROW AWAY GET OUT AND IF CEREBUS HAD IT TO DO OVER AGAIN CEREBUS WOULD (NO HE WOULDN'T) DO THE SAME THING ALL OVER AGAIN AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO STARVE TO

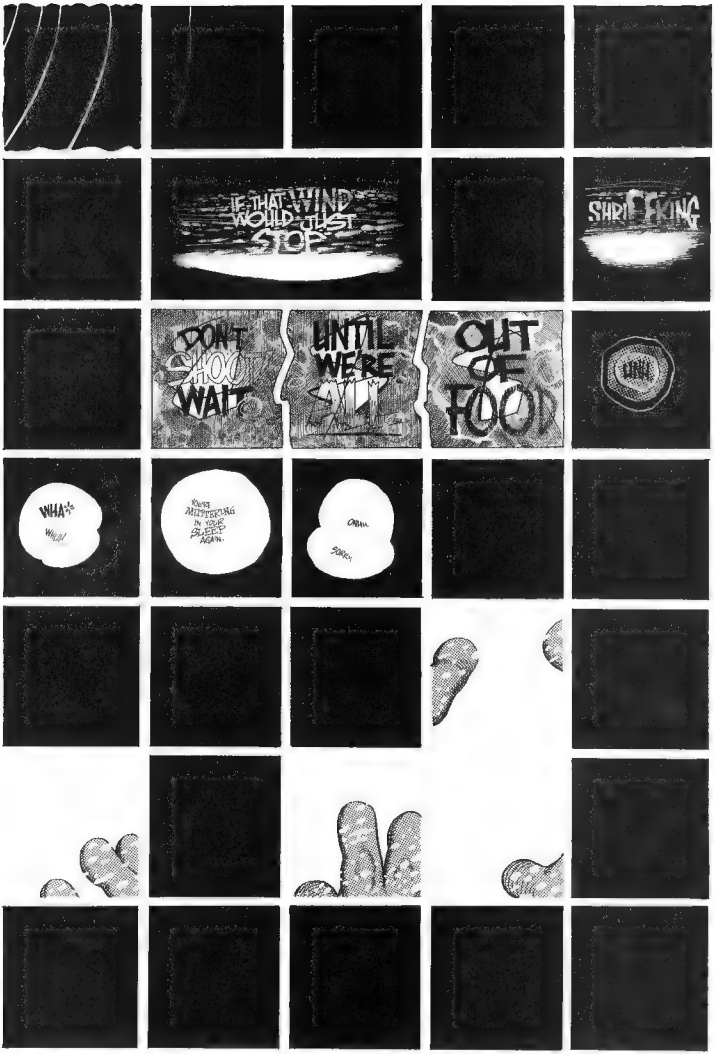


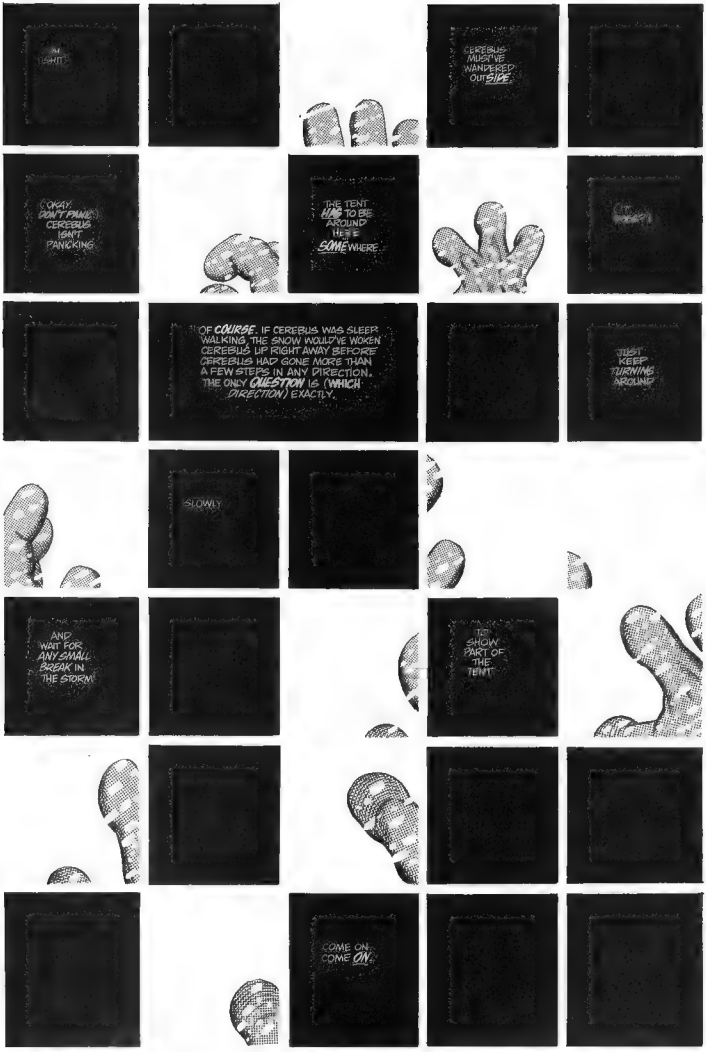
STARVE TO DEATH CEREBUS KNOWS IT JAKA KNOWS IT (CAVE AND, I) AND SINCE THE STORM ISN'T GOING TO LIFT THEN THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY CAMPFIRE (NAH, THERE ISN'T, SO, I) SO IF IT WILL MAKE JAKA FEEL BETTER EVEN FOR A SECOND, TO THINK THAT THE LAMP WILL LIGHT MAYBE IT'S THE LEAST CEREBUS CAN...

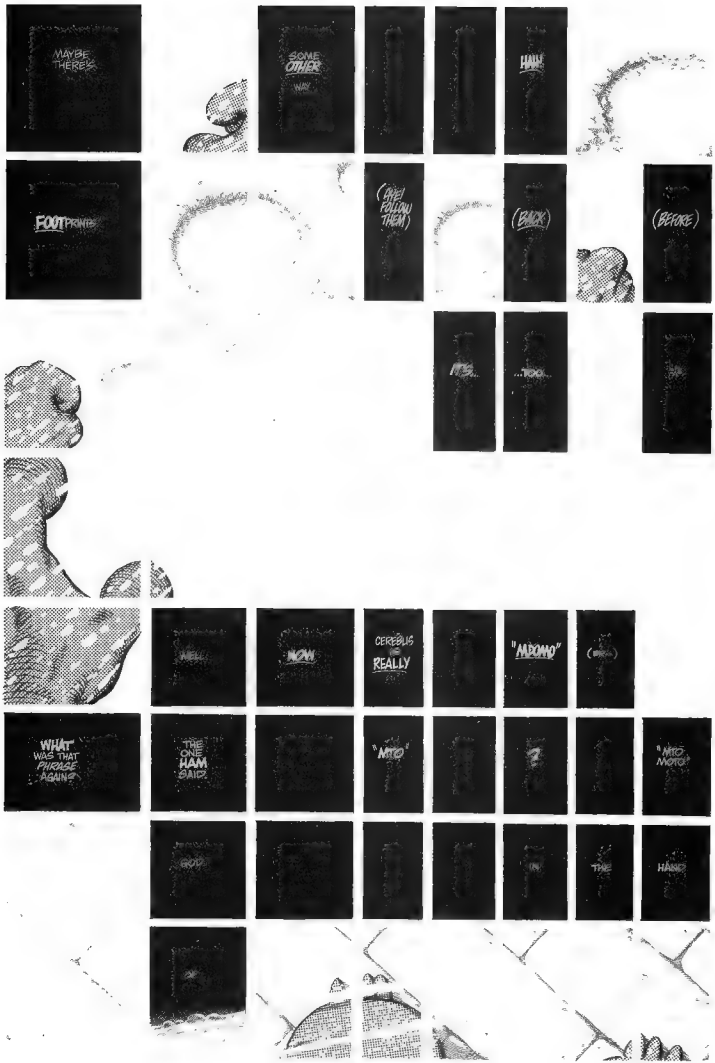


AYE! ♪
MAYBE THERE'S SOME KIERKEGAARD IN THE BOTTOM.

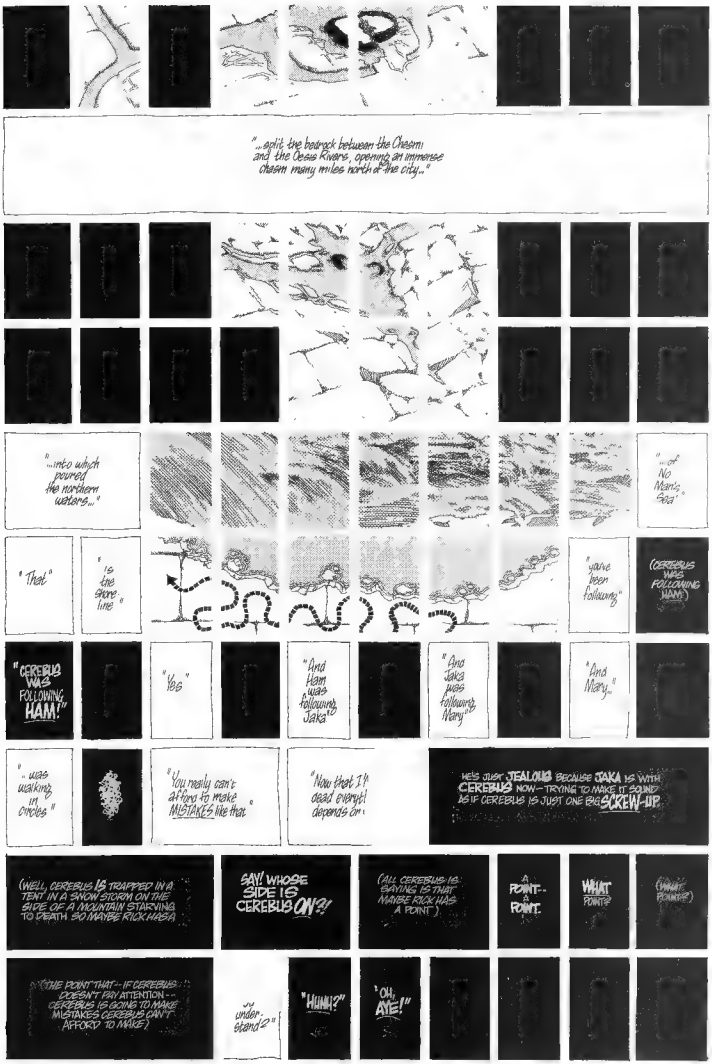

WAS THAT JUST NOW?
(WAS WHAT JUST
...GIVING THE LAST MATCH OF WAS CEREBUS JUST REMEMBERING LIGHTING THE LAST MATCH?
CEREBUS COULD ASK TAKA
ASK TAKA WHAT
"AFTER CEREBUS BLOWS HIS HEAD OFF..."
D YOU ROMISE TO EAT EREBUS' ORPSE?"
"YOU HAVE TO PROMI CERE
CEREBUS THOUGHT WE AGREED THAT WE WEREN'T GOING TO TALK ABOUT THAT
YET.

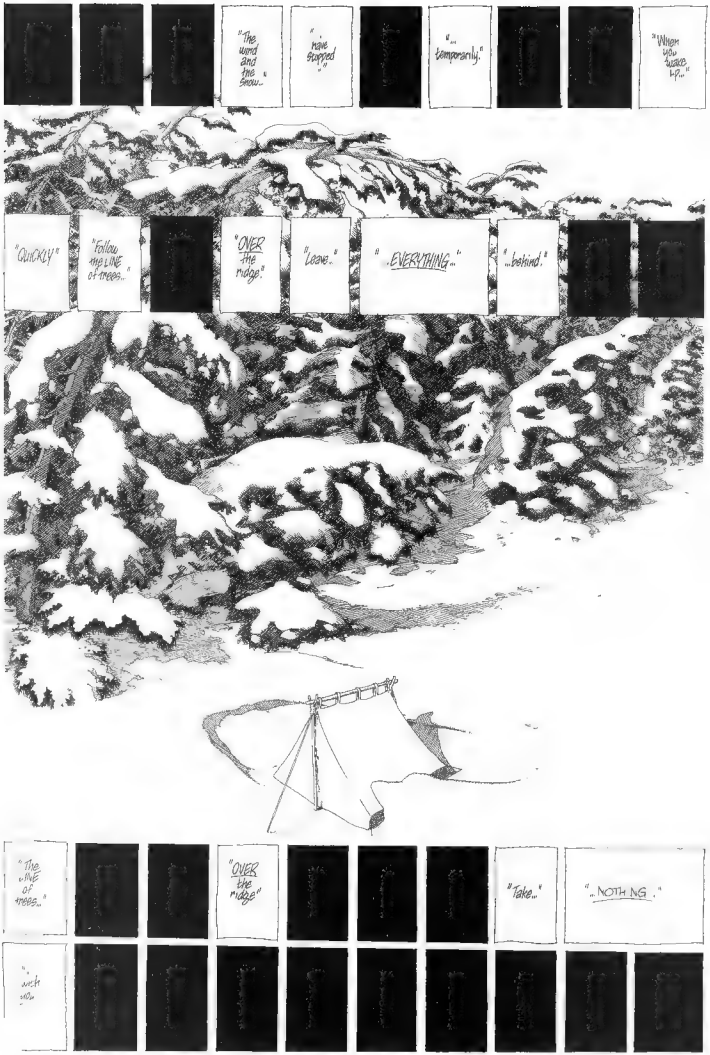

IF THAT WIND WOULD JUST STOP
SHIT
DON'T SHOOT WAIT
UNTIL WE'RE OUT
OUT OF FOOD
WHA?
WHAT
YOU'RE MUTTERING IN YOUR SLEEP AGAIN.
OHH.
SORRY.

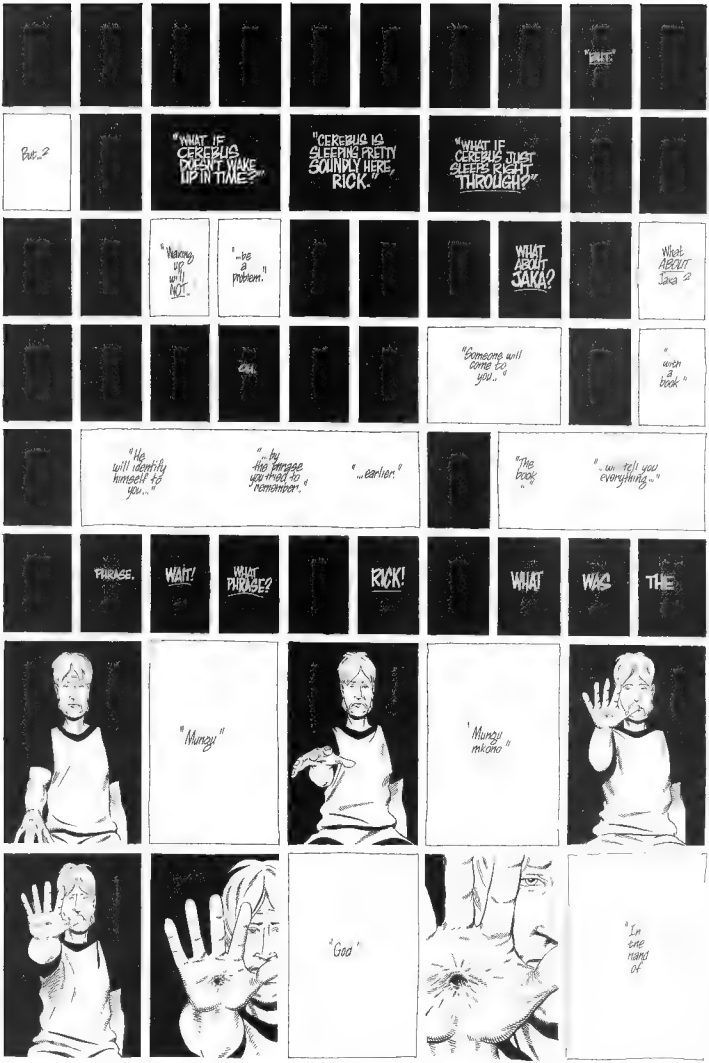

OH SHIT!
CEREBUS MUST'VE WANDERED OUTSIDE
OKAY. DON'T PANIC. CEREBUS WON'T PANICKING.
THE TENT HAS TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.
OF COURSE. IF CEREBUS WAS SLEEP WALKING, THE SNOW WOULD'VE WOKEN CEREBUS UP RIGHT AWAY BEFORE CEREBUS HAD GONE MORE THAN A FEW STEPS IN ANY DIRECTION. THE ONLY QUESTION IS (WHICH DIRECTION) EXACTLY.
JUST KEEP TURNING AROUND
SLOWLY
AND WAIT FOR ANY SMALL BREAK IN THE STORM
I'LL SHOW PART OF THE TENT
COME ON. COME ON.


MAYBE THERE'S
SOME OTHER WAY
HALL
FOOTPRINTS
(AND FOLLOW THEM)
(BACK)
(BEFORE)
IT'S...
...YOU...
WELL
WOW!
CERBERUS IS REALLY
"MADOMO"
(BRRR)
WHAT WAS THAT PURGE AGAIN?
THE ONE HAM SAID?
"MITO"
?
"MITO MOTO!"
GOD
IN
THE
HANDS

CEREBUS HAS BEEN HERE BEFORE.
CEREBUS KNEW SOMEONE WHO LIVED HERE... ...WHO WAS...?
OH NO! RUN AWAY!
(RUN AWAY? HE'S PROBABLY ALREADY SEEN CEREBUS. CEREBUS WILL JUST HAVE TO BE POLITE.) SHIT. CEREBUS HATES BEING POLITE.
"RICK!"
"HA-HA!"
THIS WAS A MISTAKE.
HE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO CEREBUS ANY MORE THAN CEREBUS WANTS TO TALK TO HIM.
"HA-HA."
"SO? HOW ARE YOU?"
"Dead"
"DEAD?"
"Uhh-hmm"
"The Cinnigts executed me."
"Six days ago."
NOW WHAT?
CEREBUS NEVER KNOWS WHAT TO SAY TO DEAD PEOPLE.
(CEREBUS SHOULD ASK RICK ABOUT THE SHORELINE.) NAH. (WHY NOT?)
WHAT IF HE MAKES A BIG DEAL ABOUT IT? YOU KNOW.
(WOW. WHAT KIND OF A BIG DEAL, E)
LAUGHING AT CEREBUS AND SAYING:
"YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE SHORELINE WAS...?"
"HA-HA. HEY JAKA!"
"YOUR NEW BOYFRIEND DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT SHORELINE HE'S FOLLOWING. HA-HA. MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE STUCK WITH
"The Convulsion uh oh destroyed Iest."


"...split the bedrock between the Cheam and the Ossa Rivers, opening an immense chasm many miles north of the city..."
"...into which poured the northern waters..."
"...of No Man's Sea."
"That"
"is the story line."
"you've been following."
(CEREBUS WAS FOLLOWING HAM!)
"CEREBUS WAS FOLLOWING HAM!"
"Yes"
"And Ham was following Jaka"
"And Jaka was following Mary"
"And Mary..."
"...was walking in circles"
"You really can't afford to make MISTAKES like that."
"Now that I'm dead everyone depends on..."
HE'S JUST JEALOUS BECAUSE JAKA IS WITH CEREBUS NOW--TRYING TO MAKE IT SOUND AS IF CEREBUS IS JUST ONE BIG SCREW-UP.
(WELL, CEREBUS IS TRAPPED IN A TENT IN A SNOW STORM ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN STARVING TO DEATH, SO MAYBE RICK HASA
SAY! WHOSE SIDE IS CEREBUS ON?
(ALL CEREBUS IS SAYING IS THAT MAYBE RICK HAS A POINT.)
A POINT-- A POINT.
WHAT POINT?
(WHAT POINT?)
(THE POINT THAT-- IF CEREBUS DOESN'T PAY ATTENTION-- CEREBUS IS GOING TO MAKE MISTAKES CEREBUS CAN'T AFFORD TO MAKE.)
...understand?"
"HUHH!?"
"OH, AYE!"


"The wind and the snow..
"...have stopped..."
"...temporarily."
"When you wake up..."
"QUICKLY"
"Follow the LINE of trees..."
"OVER the ridge."
"Leave..."
"...EVERYTHING..."
"...behind."
"The LINE of trees..."
"OVER the ridge"
"Take..."
"...NOTHING."
"...with you."


But...?
"WHAT IF CEREBUS DOESN'T WAKE UP IN TIME?"
"CEREBUS IS SLEEPING PRETTY SOUNDLY HERE, RICK."
"WHAT IF CEREBUS JUST SLEEPS RIGHT THROUGH?"
"Waking up won't NOT ...
"...be a problem."
WHAT ABOUT JAKA?
What ABOUT Jaka?
OH.
"Someone will come to you..."
"...with a book."
"He will identify himself to you..."
"...by the image you had to remember."
"...earlier."
"The book..."
"...will tell you everything..."
PHRASE.
WAIT!
WHAT PHRASE?
RICK!
WHAT
WAS
THE
"Mungy"
"Mungy mkono"
"God"
"In the name of

KA
KE

TO HAM & HAM NOT

continued from last issue

Husbands tend to indulge in wishful thinking, epitomized by such observations as "It is always very silent when a great beast dies," and hope that certain persons (not mentioning any names) will take the hint. As I say, wishful thinking.

We went to look at the Lioness-buffet, and saw bat-eared foxes, chased a Rhino, saw a bush-baby with its great eyes shining in a tree and a hundred other bright eyes of insects, birds and beasts.

The eyes of Nature, multiplied a hundredfold, at a loss (I suspect) as to how to reflect their first exposure to Mr. and Mrs. Postwar Global American Empire, the Lady Lion-Killer and her Drunken-Typist mate.

INTERMISSION

It is at this point in the story that Mary does her first distinctly wifely, distinctly feminine thing since commenting on Papa's breakfast sandwiches. Still miserable and unsatisfied by the resolution of the "lion business" (in *that*, I suspect, she was not alone), she chooses to fly into Nairobi with Roy Marsh for a few days of Christmas shopping. It seems a feminine truism that when you are *so* miserable that even *sulking* won't do any good, it is time to withdraw geographically so you can enjoy the extent to which everyone missed you when you come back. According to her Journal she intended to leave on Saturday the 12th and to return on Tuesday the 15th. The measure of her female misery can be taken from the fact that she did not return until Wednesday the 16th to make sure that not only was she "*missed*" but that, for at least twenty-four hours, she was "*worried about.*" That and four days of shopping underwritten by the not-exactly-pauperish Ernest Hemingway should have (I'm sure the ladies in the audience will concur) done the trick.

Alas, it proved an inopportune time to abandon the field, as neo-pagan and card-carrying atheist Ernest Hemingway evidently attempted to "get right" with the prevailing currents and nuances which (well amplified by alcohol) were doubtless careening around Kimana Swamp like some metaphysical India rubber ball and (in the absence of the Lady Lion-Killer) were finding their focal length and epicenter in proximity to her hubby the Drunken Typist.

To the extent that Nature had difficulty reflecting a Lady Lion-Killer, a Drunken Typist was just a Drunk (Nature having no experience with prefiguring or reflecting a Typist—whatever *that* might be). Hemingway, I believe, attempted to compensate for this inadequacy in his nature by "going native" or, at least, "going as native as a fat, Drunken Typist can go": dying much of his wardrobe the strange red colour favoured by the Wakamba, shaving his head, taking spear-throwing lessons, walking around buck naked in the bush at night, and attempting to get a little orgy going with some of the Wakamba girls in his and Mary's tent in Mary's absence (breaking Mary's cot in the process and prompting one of the Wakamba to warn Gitchie Manitou's earthbound incarnation that there was going to be some serious trouble with the relatives if the girls didn't *hie* themselves back to the shamba *tout de suite).*

Upon Mary's arrival back at Kimana, in some peculiar Hemingway variation on "Gee, I sure missed you, hon" (having more in common with "See what happens to me when you go away?"), he *told* her *all* of this.

Seriously.

As well as a highly suspect tale of the killing of a leopard—the one with which he had promised to salve her conscience—which takes up three full pages of pulse-pounding action in *True at First Light* and which is notable both for the fluency with which Hemingway discusses every detail of the action with his non-English-speaking Wakamba brothers and for the complete absence of any English-speaking person who could verify a word of it.

Oh, and he killed a hyena with a spear.

Well. I hope the shopping was good, anyway.

So. While Mr. and Mrs. Postwar American Global Empire, the Lady Lion-Killer *cum* Smart Christmas Shopper, and her hubby, Gitchie Manitou's earthbound incarnation, a.k.a. the Drunken Typist, were taking their marriage to a new level of…something…Nature seemed to have settled into reflecting the larger view—the Big Picture:

Green army worms eat the flowers. Birds eat the army worms. The male birds are red on top. The female birds are red on the bottom.

'Twas ever thus.

There are many, many endings to the safari, just as there are many, many endings to "Form & Void." *This*…(finally)…

…is one of them.

À REBOURS

The restoration of the natural order of things did not extend to the Hemingways. Very much the contrary. So, here's where it gets even more complicated, interesting and/or repulsive—depending on your vantage point—requiring (in any case) a considerable amount of explanation.

Journal (Saturday, December 19, Kimana Swamp) page 204

"Papa's interview with a reporter..."

The "interview" for "Recondite magazine" (recondite: "remote from ordinary or easy perception; abstruse; secret") can, I think, be attributed to EH at-

tempting to cheer his wife up after (no surprise here) the recounting of his various adventures in her absence had failed to put a smile on her face. Anyone who is now or has ever been a card-carrying member of the society of husbands and/or boyfriends will recognize the technique: begin with an absurd premise—Ernest Hemingway openly discussing his sexual proclivities with a magazine reporter—and then improvise the resulting dialogue, playing both parts. If you're a guy and you have even a *modest* imagination and a *modest* sense of humour, you make your wife or girlfriend laugh using this technique. Since women are emotion-based beings, that's all that's really required most of the time. She's miserable. You make her laugh. Presto-change-o, she's happy. Without this masculine technique I dare say most relationships wouldn't make it very far off the starting blocks and the wife-girlfriend suicide rate would be much higher than it is.

What is interesting about this *particular* piece of matrimonial mirth-making is that it was recorded for posterity. I would speculate that Mary recorded it—at least partly—in an attempt to fill the void left by the "end" of her Ahab-like quest for "her" lion. What else did she have to write about? It is significant to me that she didn't take her Journal with her to Nairobi on her Christmas shopping trip. It was left at Kimana Swamp—a kind of safari bookmark—and, evidently, on her return she was at a loss as to what to write about (after she had documented Gitchie Manitou's earthbound incarnation's fantasies and fables about "going native") and decided to reconstruct the Hemingway improvisation which had tickled her funnybone.

She gets it wrong.

Again, any husband or boyfriend knows the experience of the wife or girlfriend trying to relate a recent improvisation to outsiders—or, far worse, trying to get the husband or boyfriend to "perform" it—not realizing that it doesn't work that way. Comedy which is improvised to make the wife or girlfriend laugh is tailored to her level of appreciation—targeted to an audience of one—and to the ear of the outsider just sounds demented and unfunny. Particularly when the wife or girlfriend is convulsing herself by blurting out the punch line, mangling the premise, or paraphrasing the word rhythms. Any and all of which are guaranteed to leave the audience begging for less and the wife/girlfriend and husband/boyfriend looking like complete idiots.

Deciphering the "Recondite magazine interview" (to the extent that it is possible to decipher humour once it has been mangled by a woman), I would guess that Hemingway was "playing" the reporter as discomfitted by the topic of sodomy (uneasily substituting "cricket" at one point) and Hemingway himself as forthright and offhand on the same subject. To be completely indelicate, I believe EH wanted to guarantee that Mary's ongoing "post-lion" depression and her lack of enthusiasm for his "going native" wouldn't lead her to close off the "collector lane" of the "hershey highway" and that he saw humour as the way to maintain his "backstage pass" (as it were).

Why does Hemingway have such an obsessive interest in sodomy? (It also seems a recurring subtext in Mary's *Journal*—shooting at the gazelle's "white behind," the lion's "moving hips," as well as a peculiar reference to rubbing face cream into Baa's rectum—you remember, Ty's granti?) Well, that's all guesswork (and *vulgar* guesswork, at that). Unfortunately, in Hemingway's case it seems to be necessary to understand him as a writer, as a man, and—in no small part—to explain how a Drunkard Typist achieved the lofty heights that he did in what Tom Wolfe once christened the "quality lit biz."

My own view is that it is best to begin an examination of the subject with Gertrude Stein.

GERTRUDE STEIN

I'm not sure exactly who or (perhaps more incisively) *what* Gertrude Stein *was,* but she does seem to have been a linchpin presence in the Emperor's New Art, the Moronic Art Movement of the 20th century. As an example, evidence would indicate that it was only prolonged exposure to Gertrude Stein which transformed Pablo Picasso from a third-rate (but largely accessible) painter of harlequins into the undisputed *maitre* of geometric twaddle-and-nonsense-in-oil-colours. The same process took place with Hemingway in the field of literature, except that—instead of his being *persuaded* in *dialogue* with Gertrude Stein to "dumb down" his art (as, I surmise, Picasso had been)—Hemingway simply *pirated* Gertrude Stein's Moronic Art writing "style" in toto. Since said "style" consisted exclusively of simple declarative sentences stacked one atop another—like a child's alphabet blocks—in literary terms it would have amounted to petty theft rather than grand larceny had it not been the "right time, right place" for Moronic Art in its societal ascendance. Serendipitously catching that particular wave, Hemingway was able to parlay his ill-gotten gain into a substantial fortune and reputation which he rode all the way to Stockholm in less than three decades.

But, to begin at the beginning: for a time, in Paris in the fabled 'twenties, Hemingway had sought to curry favour with Gertrude Stein (who seemed always to use both her given *and* her surname in referring to herself as if Gertrude Stein were less a name than an honorific or an hereditary title) but evidently soon recognized that, Moronic Loot firmly in hand, he needed neither her benediction nor her geographic proximity to advance his cause. He had only to rise early each morning and type, type, type, type while "interior-Hollywood-Indian-voice-dictate-heap-plenty-word-count" and let 20th century Moronic Art momentum do the rest.

But, as I said, for a *time* (when it seemed to him that he had something to gain by doing so) Hemingway had grovelled and kowtowed before the granite-faced lesbian in a way that would have done credit to the most obsequious Napoleonic *courtier*: going so far as to make her the godmother of his firstborn, Jack. The *lapse* of his affections, when he saw that she had outlived her usefulness to him, was precipitous—as it had

been with his earlier mentors, Sherwood Anderson and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Having hijacked the neo-Paleolithic Gertrude Stein "voice," Hemingway had attempted yet another "clean getaway"—and may well have accomplished it, had he not ill-advisedly shared a confidence with his *mentor du jour* during that period when he was still, metaphorically, kissing the hem of her sensible frocks. Long after Hemingway believed himself to have *fled* Gertrude Stein's circle with *impunity,* he was to find that a lesbian is "no gentleman" when it comes to "taking it." That is, "taking" an undeserved slight (as Anderson and Fitzgerald, in gentlemanly fashion, *had* "taken" *their* respective and undeserved Hemingway slights before her).

With the publication of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* in 1933, from where I sit, Gertrude Stein "gave" considerably better than she "got." She "gets" Hemingway and she "gets" Hemingway good. Real good. I suspect that that was her effectively concealed motive in writing the book. Effectively concealed because Hemingway doesn't make his appearance until very, very late in the proceedings—and *then* only as an (ostensibly) sloppy afterthought dispensed with in a handful of pages (216 to 221 in my edition). A handful of pages which—while written in that moronic "See Dick run, run, Dick, run" voice—have been honed and whittled, ground and sharpened to just so many razor points. I'm sure Hemingway, on first reading, never felt a thing until—like a character in an animated cartoon—he suddenly noticed that parts of his psychic anatomy were sliding off one another into a random pile on the floor.

Some of Stein's assault is pretty direct, as when she addresses Hemingway's theft of the Gertrude Stein and Sherwood Anderson "voice":

> *Gertrude Stein and Sherwood Anderson are very funny on the subject of Hemingway. The last time that Sherwood was in Paris they often talked about him. Hemingway had been formed by the two of them and they were both a little proud and a little ashamed of the work of their minds. Hemingway had at one moment, when he had repudiated Sherwood Anderson and all his works, written him a letter in the name of american* [sic] *literature which he, Hemingway, in company with his contemporaries was about to save, telling Sherwood just what he, Hemingway thought about Sherwood's work, and, that thinking, was in no sense complimentary. When Sherwood came to Paris Hemingway naturally was afraid. Sherwood as naturally was not.*
>
> *As I say he and Gertrude Stein were endlessly amusing on the subject. They admitted that Hemingway was yellow, he is, Gertrude Stein insisted, just like the flat-boat men on the Mississippi river as described by Mark Twain.*

Having studied Hemingway for about a year, I could go on at some length as to how and why each word of this passage (subliterate as it is) was tailor-made to exact the maximum amount of damage to Hemingway's spirit and psyche. Unfortunately, it is rather beside the point relative to the more convoluted subject which concerns us here and which Gertrude Stein addresses—obliquely—in her next passage:

> *But what a book, they both agreed, would be the real story of Hemingway, not those he writes but the confessions of the real Ernest Hemingway. It would be for another audience than the audience Hemingway now has but it would be very wonderful.*

This could only be Hemingway's "Garden of Eden," the aforementioned and ill-advised confidence he (evidently) shared with Gertrude Stein on some occasion or other during the period when he was one of her devout acolytes. As with Hemingway's death wish/self-destructiveness/exhibitionism/hypochondria I discussed earlier, there seems to be no single term which encompasses Hemingway's "Garden of Eden"—to the extent that I can't even think of a suitable noun to append to "Garden of Eden" in its adjectival form. Hemingway's "Garden of Eden" …Theory? …Philosophy? …Fantasy?

In his work it consists of these jarring little notes interspersed here and there, having to do with the heroine/love interest wanting to cut her hair short so as to make herself indistinguishable from the hero. Some examples (beginning with *A Farewell to Arms*—which is where, evidently, Gertrude Stein first noticed it in an early draught of the novel):

> *'I'd rather look at you. Darling, why don't you let your hair grow?'*
>
> *'How grow?'*
>
> *'Just grow a little longer.'*
>
> *'It's long enough now.'*
>
> *'No, let it grow a little longer and I could cut mine and we'd be just alike only one of us blonde and one of us dark.'*
>
> *'I wouldn't let you cut yours.'*
>
> *'It would be fun. I'm tired of it. It's an awful nuisance in the bed at night.'*
>
> *'I like it.'*
>
> *'Wouldn't you like it short?'*
>
> *'I might. I like it the way it is.'*
>
> *'It might be nice short. Then we'd both be alike. Oh, darling. I want you so much I want to be you too.'*
>
> *'You are. We're the same one.'*
>
> *'I know it. At night we are.'*
>
> *'The nights are grand.'*
>
> *'I want us to be all mixed up.'*
>
> *A Farewell to Arms,* pages 258-259

> *The last time I slept with a girl was in Madrid. No it wasn't. It was in the Escorial and, except that I woke in the night and thought it was some one else and was excited until I realized who it really was, it was just dragging ashes; except that it was pleasant enough. And the time before that was in Madrid and except for some lying and pretending I did to myself as to the identity while*

things were going on, it was the same or something less.

For Whom the Bell Tolls, page 166

"No. Afterwards we will be as one animal of the forest and be so close that neither one can tell that one of us is one and not the other. Can you not feel my heart be your heart?"

"Yes. There is no difference."

"Now, feel. I am thee and thou art me and all of one is the other. And I love thee, oh, I love thee so. Are you not truly one? Canst thou not feel it?"

"Yes," he said. "It is true."

"And feel now. Thou hast no heart but mine."

"Nor any other legs, nor feet, nor of the body."

"But we are different," she said. "I would have us exactly the same."

"You do not mean that."

"Yes I do. I do. That is a thing I had to tell thee."

"You do not mean that."

"Perhaps I do not," she said speaking softly with her lips against his shoulder. "But I wished to say it. Since we are different I am glad that thou are Roberto and I Maria. But if thou should ever wish to change I would be glad to change. I would be thee because I love thee so."

"I do not wish to change. It is better to be one and each one to be the one he is."

"But we will be one now and there will never be a separate one."

For Whom the Bell Tolls, pages 262-263

He came up to the lean-to very quietly and his sister did not hear him. She was lying on her side, reading. Seeing her, he spoke softly not to startle her.

"What did you do, you monkey?"

She turned and looked at him and smiled and shook her head.

"I cut it off," she said.

"How?"

"With a scissors. How did you think?"

"How did you see to do it?"

"I just held it out and cut it. It's easy. Do I look like a boy?"

"Like a wild boy of Borneo."

"I couldn't cut it like a Sunday-school boy. Does it look too wild?"

"No."

"I wish it would."

"You're crazy, Littless."

"Maybe I am. Do I look like an idiot boy?"

"A little."

"You can make it neater. You can see to cut it with a comb."

"I'll have to make it a little better but not much. Are you hungry, idiot brother?"

"Can't I just be an un-idiot brother?"

"I don't want to trade you for a brother."

"You have to now, Nickie, don't you see? It was something we had to do. I should have asked you but I knew it was something we had to do so I did it for a surprise."

"I like it," Nick said. "The hell with everything. I like it very much."

"The Last Good Country"

Now, it's hard to know what to make of this. It recurs a sufficient number of times both in Hemingway's writing and in his life that it was clearly a subject near and dear to his heart as well as the more...southerly? ...parts of his anatomy and that it was no passing fancy. Two examples should suffice: first, the recollection of Elsie Byron, the daughter of a Wyoming rancher discussing an incident with wife #2, Pauline, in 1928:

There was one thing that happened that Pauline got such a kick out of. She and Ernest were in the car with Papa and they met one of the sheepherders. He was mad about something and he started swearing. Papa said, "Now, now! There's a lady in the car!" The sheepherder looked at Pauline and said, "I don't see no lady." Pauline was dressed in overalls and a denim shirt and had her hair cut short and a little French cap on. He didn't know she was a woman. They thought that was quite a joke.

Second, from Mary's East Africa Journal a quarter century later:

Journal (Sunday, January 3, 1954, Kimana) page 229

We've had big business about my hair which we've bleached again and Papa cut very short then I cut across in front in idiot imitation of the local Kamba girls.

A lurid subject of some kind, but what *is* the subject? Transsexuality? *Role-playing* transsexuality? *Cross-dressing* transsexuality (which is what I have Cerebus imagining—to his own great consternation—on the next page)? Homosexuality? Latent homosexuality? Blatant homosexuality? Or...my own theory...something for which (so far as I know) there is no exact term and which is, if not unique to Hemingway, then darned close to it.

Hermaphrophile (to coin a term)? *Masculine* hermaphrophile?

How would that shake out in Webster's? "A man sexually aroused by the idea of his partner possessing secondary (tertiary?) characteristics of the *masculine* gender, with the proviso that the partner must possess primary (*and* secondary? tertiary?) sexual characteristics of a woman." "Compare and contrast with *androgyphile* and define whether it is just west, east, above, below, or kitty-corner from the former."

Having read a number of Hemingway biographies, I can safely say that his biographers' collective interest in this (central?) aspect of Hemingway the man and Hemingway the writer is just about nil. As opposed to, say, his alcoholism, which always merits many pages of closely reasoned arguments filtered through whatever constitutes the voodoo profession (psychiatry)'s latest and best guesswork on the subject.

Anyway, this is what Gertrude Stein was using to get under Hemingway's skin. And get under his skin she most certainly did. Apparently (more the fool he) Hemingway thought this "hermaphrophilism" of his was a kind of bohemian credential and saw it as a kind of "common ground" with what was (undoubtedly) the first lesbian he had ever met. What Hemingway had failed to understand was that Gertrude Stein's lesbian view of *male* homosexuality had much in common with that of most heterosexual men: she was disgusted by male homosexuality or, in fact, any kind of male vulnerability or weakness, and, as for using such a perversion as *entrée* into bohemianism or to pass as a "modern" (a '20s term for a bohemian):

...you see he is like Derain. You remember monsieur de Tuille said, when I did not understand why Derain was having the success he was having that it was because he looks like a modern and he smells of the museums. And that is Hemingway, he looks like a modern and he smells of the museums.

In the very next sentence, having destroyed Hemingway's bohemian pretensions, Stein returns to his "hermaphrophilism." I doubt that she thought of it that way, nor would she have been interested in any dialectics of nuance on the subject—lesbians being pretty practical and basic on the subject of men, since (from where they sit) the masculine world can be neatly divided into those who dislike lesbians (and might do something about it), those who are afraid of lesbians (and are, therefore, easily dealt with), and, last and certainly least, those *males*—as apposed to *men*—who have capitulated on all issues of gender interchangeability (and, who are, consequently, beneath lesbian notice where they are not beneath lesbian contempt):

But what a story that of the real Hem, and one he should tell himself but alas he never will. After all, as he himself once murmured, there is the career, the career.

Unlike the hatchet job Hemingway performed on Sherwood Anderson with *The Torrents of Spring*, this is *real* surgery, the literary wounds inflicted in such a way that they would never heal or even close properly. The legal boundaries are scrupulously adhered to so that—even had Hemingway the resources and the inclination—he could not bring suit for libel or defamation of character. All he could do was to watch the wounds open and reopen for the rest of his life.

The reiterated point could not be overlooked—even by someone as dim-witted as Hemingway—standing naked before the world of *belles lettres*, his pseudo-bohemianism a shredded garment around his ankles and his very manhood called into question. As galling as the latter must have been, still it was small potatoes compared to the charge of intellectual dishonesty, literary dishonesty: "careerism."

Hemingway's first attempt at "getting even" was almost laughably inept. He cast Gertrude Stein as Pilar, the leader of the guerilla band in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and, in a passage buried near the end of the book, implies there had been some kind of lesbian attraction between Pilar and Maria (the female love interest who is hopelessly in love with Hemingway stand-in Robert Jordan). Hemingway "gets the girl," and Gertrude Stein doesn't.

If Gertrude Stein didn't have a good horse laugh over that one, she certainly deserved to.

Hemingway named his beloved fishing boat Pilar so that (in his own peculiar Hemingway fashion) he was floating around the Gulf Stream *on* Gertrude Stein. No great satisfaction to be had there, either, presumably—when weighed against the damage to his ego, his credentials as a bohemian, as a writer, and as a man.

After nearly a decade, with the wounds still open and festering, it seems that Hemingway—slowly, ponderously, finally—came to the realization that the only way to refute her charges of intellectual dishonesty, literary dishonesty, and careerism was to produce a work which was intellectually honest, literarily honest, and which was not embarked upon with the sole intention of advancing his career. The fact that it took ten years to come to that realization, of course, only reinforces the validity of Stein's initial assessment of Hemingway as a writer.

GARDEN OF EDEN

Hemingway began work on *Garden of Eden* sometime in 1946, and his interior stadium-full-of-monkeys took to their subject like so many anthropoid ducks-to-water, and in a very short space of time he had type-type-type-typed well over a thousand manuscript pages about David Bourne, his newlywed wife Catherine, their tans, their favourite foods, their drinks, and their hair. Oh, yes: "Heap-plenty-word-count" about their hair in terms of length, style, and colour.

Garden of Eden was one of the first examples of Hemingway's typing that I read, the dust jacket description about "a young American writer and his wife on an extended honeymoon in Mediterranean France..." and "Catherine, his wife...encourages him to write, but in fact resents the separation" having led me to believe that this might be Hemingway's "take" on Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald and, thus, relevant to my Fitzgerald research for "Fall and the River." Having no idea of Hemingway's "hermaphrophilism" at the time, I thought the book might have been a source for the "Fitzgerald was a closet gay" theories that were floating around in the immediate aftermath of feminism's onset. I also thought it wasn't very good and hoped it wasn't representative of Hemingway's writing, which, alas, it proved to be.

continued next issue